


# Memorandum



**Date:** May 22, 2007

**To:** Honorable Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** George M. Surin   
County Manager

Supplement to  
Agenda Item No. 7A

**Subject:** Supplement Information to Ordinance Pertaining to Chapter 26 of the Code of Miami-Dade County Entitled "Park and Recreation Department Rules and Regulations"; Deleting Section 26-33; Creating Article III to Require Criminal Background Checks for all Persons Working or Volunteering on County Park Property – Regarding Possible Organizations that can Provide Criminal Background Checks at a Discounted or Lump-sum Rate

At the April 9, 2007 Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee, Commissioner Moss requested that staff review and report on other possible organizations that can provide criminal background checks at a discounted or lump-sum rate. The issue being that smaller Community Based Organizations may have limited resources available to perform the background checks required by the Ordinance.

All national organizations that promote youth athletic or service programs have a criminal background check policy to which they expect all of their affiliates to adhere. The background check and cost sharing services that national organizations provide their affiliates varies from one organization to another. The following are some representative examples of what is available.

The American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) has a program called Safe Haven established to comply with the Child Protection Act and the Volunteer Protection Act. AYSO through the Safe Haven program acts as the criminal background requesting entity for all affiliates. AYSO was the first youth sports organization to create a formal program and offers assistance to other youth sports organizations interested in developing their own Safe Haven programs. Information about this service can be found on the AYSO website, ([www.soccer.org](http://www.soccer.org)).

The Little League International has contracted with a company called ChoicePoint to provide chartered U.S. leagues with 80 free searches. Additional searches above 80 that may be necessary are available at a reduced cost of only \$1 per search. They do not offer this service through Little League International to other organizations.

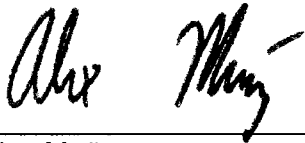
The National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) does not exclusively endorse any single approach to or method of conducting background checks, but NAYS has identified a nine step, comprehensive screening policy for organizations to utilize; one of these components is a background check. NAYS members do receive discounts or promotions from six companies that provide background services. Information about these services can be found on the NAYS website, ([www.NAYS.org](http://www.NAYS.org)).

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. requires that each league conduct background checks on all persons who provide regular service to the league and/or who have repetitive access to or contact with players or teams. Other than providing information on their website ([www.popwarner.com](http://www.popwarner.com)) about the 43 states that provide free background checks (limited in most cases to a state search), and the seven states

with a free requirement that ranges from \$5 to \$18, Pop Warner does not have an assistance program for individual associations.

The National Mentoring Partnership has a program called SafetyNET started in 2003 as a federally sponsored pilot program through which local mentoring organizations across the country can access FBI fingerprint-based background checks on new volunteers through the National Mentoring Partnership. The pilot program funded through 2008 will test out several mechanisms for obtaining FBI background checks in an efficient and timely manner. The resulting information will help make a case for a permanent workable system for obtaining background checks on volunteers who work with children. Through SafetyNET, each FBI background check costs \$18 and results are delivered within 3-5 business days. Other organizations may qualify to participate in this program. Information about SafetyNET can be found at, ([www.mentoring.org/safetynet](http://www.mentoring.org/safetynet)).

There are a number of youth serving organizations as well as state resources that provide quality background checks for local organizations. There is every indication based on the preliminary research that those groups that are affiliated with a national or international organization do have access to reliable and mostly affordable background check information regardless of their size or resources. Those groups outside of any national affiliation can obtain national background checks through the Volunteer and Employee Criminal History System (VECHS) at a cost of \$47-\$36. It is staff's recommendation that small CBO's contact reputable private companies such as those affiliated with NAYS, who offer discounted or promotion opportunities.



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Alex Muñoz  
Assistant County Manager